

REMARKS

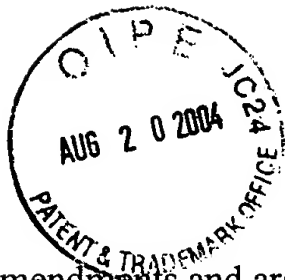
Claims 2-9 and 11-16 have been previously presented. Claims 1 and 10 are amended. Claims 17-20 are canceled. As a result, claims 1-16 are pending in the application.

Rejection of Claims 1, 5-11 and 13-14 and 16 under 35 USC §102

Claims 1, 5-11, 13-14 and 16 are rejected as being anticipated by U.S. Patent Number 6,636,657 (Aksyuk).

In accordance with a telephone interview held on August 18, 2004, the Applicant has amended Claim 1 so as to remove the phrase “a region of.” Additionally, claim 10 is amended to remedy an antecedent basis problem that results from the amendment of claim 1.

In view of this amendment, Independent Claim 1 specifies that the attenuators are “configured to attenuate the light signals in the light distributor.” Because Aksyuk does not teach attenuators that attenuate light signals in a light distributor, Aksyuk does not anticipate Independent Claim 1.



CONCLUSION

In light of the Amendments and arguments set forth above, Applicants believe they are entitled to a letters patent. The Examiner is encouraged to telephone the undersigned with any questions.

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Law Offices of Travis Dodd
A Professional Corporation
2490 Heyneman Hollow
Fallbrook, CA 92028
Telephone 1: (760) 415-2352
Telephone2: (760) 731-3091
Fax: (760) 728-1541
e-mail: Lisdodd@aol.com

Respectfully submitted

TRAVIS DODD
Reg. No. 42,491